

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**APPLICATION FOR EXTENDED AREA TELEPHONE SERVICE
BETWEEN RUSHVILLE AND HAY SPRINGS
FAILS TO MEET TRAFFIC MINIMUMS**

LINCOLN – Citing a failure for the two communities to generate a minimum calling volume to one another, the Nebraska Public Service Commission, at its October 7 meeting dismissed applications at its October 7 meeting seeking extended area telephone service between the Hay Springs and Rushville exchanges.

Both communities are served by Great Plains Communications. In rejecting the applications, the Commission said its rules require customers in the petitioning exchange to average five calls per month to the other exchange. Additionally, 50 percent or more of the customers should be making at least two calls per month.

The PSC received two petitions in July seeking implementation of extended area service between the two northwest Nebraska exchanges, one from each community.

At Hay Springs, telephone customers averaged between 4.2 and 4.5 calls per customer per month to Rushville during the test months of July through September of this year. The highest percentage of Hay Springs customers making at least two calls monthly to Rushville was 40.3 percent, which occurred in July.

Figures were slightly higher at Rushville, but still fell below the Commission's rules. Rushville customers averaged between 4.3 and 4.7 calls to Hay Springs during the three-month period, a high of 46.8 percent of the customers made at least two calls to Hay Springs in September.

The usage study performed by Great Plains Communications only includes calls made between the communities on landline telephones. Wireless telephone calls were not included.

Commissioner Jerry Vap from McCook, who represents the Rushville and Hay Springs area said, "While there is clearly a significant interest between the Rushville and Hay Springs communities, the calling volume failed to meet the threshold in our rules. Great Plains Communications has committed to review the needs of their customers in rural Nebraska and develop service offerings to address these needs."

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Send to: Chadron Record (cdrrecord@bbc.net), Sheridan County Star at Rushville (no e-mail listed), KCSR in Chadron (kcsr@chadrad.com), KQSK-FM at Chadron (kcow@bbc.net), Omaha World-Herald, and Associated Press.